

Spring 1-15-1999

ENG 1002C-040: Literature and Composition

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English 1002 C: A course description and syllabus.

Instructor: Spear
 Office: Coleman Hall 332
 Phone: 581-7011 or 345-9684
 Office Hours: 1:00 - 2:00 M and W
 and by appointment.

Required purchases:

a spiral notebook to be used as a journal for this class only
 four exam booklets (available at the Union Bookstore)

Textbooks:

Charters, Ann. The Story and Its Writer.
 Griffith, Kelly. Writing Essays About Literature.
 Jacobus, Lee A. The Bedford Introduction to Drama.
 Meyer, Michael. Poetry: An Introduction.

Writing as a Process

Writing is a teachable skill, like carpentry or painting or playing the guitar. The big difference is that you can have a wonderful life without ever becoming a carpenter or painter or musician, but effective writing is an indispensable skill that will help you along in whatever role you create for yourself. Rumor has it that good writing is the product of inspiration, but this is for the most part a fallacy. Good writing is not really even a product at all; it is a process. And, as Linda Flower says in Problem Solving Strategies for Writing, "if a writer's method relies on waiting for inspiration, she may have a long and uninterrupted wait."

The process theory of writing also does away with the old notion of "first you think it up, then you write it down." What happens more often than not is that you write your way toward what you believe: you discover new ideas as you write. Writing becomes a thinking process that improves with practice. That is why we will be keeping journals. The journal writing technique is a way of practicing the necessary skills in way that adds up to many many pages, without demanding eight or ten papers from you. It also gives you a no-pressure environment in which to warm up your skills.

English 1002

The prerequisite for this course is the successful completion of English 1001 C or its equivalent. No student may take 1002 C without having satisfied this prerequisite. This is because in our work here we will be applying the skills studied in 1001 C to the specific purpose of writing about three major genres of literature: short

fiction, drama, and poetry.

Real life writing situations, situations in which you may be applying for a job, a promotion, a grant, etc., always have a specific purpose and audience. General writing skills and talents remain as pure potential unless they can be harnessed for a purpose and fitted to the needs of a specific audience. As we write about literature, we are really practicing one application of the art of fitting and harnessing.

Grades:

Your grade will be determined by your performance on the following tasks:

- 12.5% -- A 3 to 5 page paper on short fiction, due Feb. 17.
- 12.5% -- A Mid-term Examination on Mar. 8.
- 12.5% -- A 3 to 5 page paper on drama and short fiction, due Mar. 29.
- 12.5% -- Your journal, collected March 31.
- 12.5% -- An oral presentation of Poetry, between April 5 and 21.
- 25.0% -- A 5 to 7 page research paper, due April 28.
- 12.5% -- A Final Examination, during finals week, date to be announced.

This may be one of the hardest classes you will take at the university, and it certainly will be one of the most important because, in a way, you are simultaneously attending all of your university classes that will follow. I am available by appointment at your convenience if I can help, and I have included my home phone number. Also, there is an excellent -- and free -- service available to you at the Writing Center, Coleman Hall 301. You will walk out of the door with a better paper every single time.

If an assignment is late, it will be docked one letter grade for each class session it is late. Papers that have still not been submitted two weeks after the due date will be regarded as "missing" and will receive a -2. They may not be made up. (See "Grading," below.)

Grading:

I will use the following values in averaging your grades:

A+ = 4.2	B+ = 3.2	C+ = 2.2	D+ = 1.2	F = 0.0
A = 4.0	B = 3.0	C = 2.0	D = 1.0	Missing = -1.0
A - = 3.8	B - = 2.8	C - = 1.8	D - = 0.8	

I will use the following cutoff points in determining final grades:

A = 4.2 to 3.8	B = 3.7 to 2.8	C = 2.7 to 1.8
N/C = 1.7 and below		

This is an A, B, C, or no-credit class, so you can't get a D or an F, but if you get a N/C you will have to take it again. Invest your talents and time in this class and you will never regret it.

Journals:

Requiring you to keep a journal is a blessing in disguise. It is a place for you to help satisfy departmental requirements for the quantity of writing you produce, free from some of the limitations associated with producing a polished rhetorical artifact. Journal entries can record your impressions of the works you read and serve as practice fields for the essays you subsequently generate. Each day's entry should consist of at least one hundred and fifty words. The journals will be collected, and their evaluation will constitute a significant portion of your grade.

Information for Students with Disabilities:

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Plagiarism Policy

I am required to say this about the English Department's policy concerning plagiarism:

"Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism -- 'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and / or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) -- has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay, and a grade of N/C for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs office.

Pretty strong language for a pretty serious offense; it occurs, and has resulted, in some cases, in expulsion from the university. We're learning a survival skill here, and a cheater is only cheating himself.

Syllabus for English 1002C -- Spring semester, 1999.

- Jan. 11 Introduction to the Class: Composition and Literature.
Review of Syllabus.
Review of Strategies of Invention
Writing about literature:
 MLA Format
 Audience and Purpose
 Concepts versus Description
 Present Tense
- 13 Read Woody Allen's "The Kuglemass Episode," p. 32 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In-class diagnostic essay.
- 15 In class discussion of Allen and diagnostic essays.
- 18 Dr. King's Birthday -- no class.
- 20 Read Atwood's "Happy Endings," p. 66 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
Writing groups.
In class discussion.
- 22 Continued discussion.
(*) Memo to identify genealogical focus of research paper.
- 25 Read Carver's "Cathedral," p. 224 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 27 Read Steinbeck's "The Chrysanthemums," p. 1206 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 29 Gauging the reliability of narrators in short fiction.

- Feb. 1 Read Erdrich's "The Red Convertible," p 417 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 3 Read Oates's, "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?"
p. 1009 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
Writing groups.
In class discussion.
- 5 Begin video screening of Smooth Talk.
(*) Memo to report purity of genealogical descent for research paper.
- Feb. 8 View video excerpt from Smooth Talk.
(*) One page pre-research hypothesis: Anticipated Cultural Perspectives.
- 10 Complete video screening of Smooth Talk.
In class discussion.
Turn in draft of 3-5 page paper on short fiction to date.
- 12 Lincoln's Birthday. No Class.
- 15 Conferences. No Class.
- 17 *** 3 - 5 page paper due concerning short fiction covered to date.
In class reading of Garcia-Marquez's "A Very Old Man with
Enormous Wings," p. 521 in Charters.
- 19 Continued discussion of Garcia-Marquez.
- 22 Read Miller's, Death of a Salesman, p. 1000 in Jacobus.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 24 Continued discussion of Death of a Salesman.
- 26 Begin screening video of Death of a Salesman.

- Mar. 1 View video excerpt and discuss.
- 3 Complete video screening and class discussion of Miller.
- 5 (*) Turn in Bibliography of primary sources for research paper.
Review for Mid-term Examination.
- 8 *** Mid-term Examination.
- 10 (*) Secure primary sources for research paper in hard copy.
- 12 Optional conferences. No Class.

SPRING BREAK

- 22 Read Carver's "What We Talk About When We Talk
About Love," p. 243 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 24 Read Chopin's, "The Story of an Hour," p. 320 in Charters.
Journal entry on your reading.
In class discussion.
- 26 Continued discussion. Marriage and Freedom.
- 29 *** 3 - 5 page comparison paper due.
Poetry. Please bring Meyer's Poetry: An Introduction.
Poetry and Music.
- 31 Poetry and Music continued.
Bring in your requests.
Journal entry on a favorite song with poetic lyrics.
*** Turn in Journals.
- Apr. 2 Detailed discussion of Poetry assignment (oral presentations).

Apr.	5	Animal Poems:	"Suburban"	Ciardi	125
			"Dog's Death"	Updike	14
			"Hazel Tells Laverne"	Machan	50
			"The Frog"	Anonymous	208
			"The Fireflies"	Holley	82
			"Lightning Bugs"	Slyman	97
	7		"Bat"	Grennan	74
			"The Fish"	Bishop	19
			"Root Cellar"	Roethke	72
			"Woodchucks"	Kumin	52
			"To a Wasp"	Moore	95
	9		"Crow"	Hughes	H/O
			"Black Rook ..."	Plath	H/O
			"The Rabbit"	St. Germain	H/O
		(*) Turn in critiques of poetry to be included in research paper.			
	12	Poems in Their Underpants:	"After weeks of ..."	Snyder	426
			"Blow"	Humphrey	154
			"you fit into me"	Atwood	90
			"I (a"	cummings	24
			"We Real Cool"	Brooks	62
			"Marks"	Pastan	105
	14		"Poem"	Williams	69
			"Lightning Bugs"	Slyman	97
			"The Red Wheelbarrow"	Williams	203
			"she being Brand"	cummings	47
	16		"This is Just to Say"	Williams	441
			"Going to Extremes"	Armour	140
		Sports Shorts:	"The Pitcher"	Francis	154
			"The Double-Play"	Wallace	434

19 Taste of Tradition: Read Emily Dickinson's poems, p. 257 - 275 in Meyer, esp. "I Heard a Fly Buzz When I Died, Tell All the Truth, and I Like a Look of Agony."

 Read Eybers, p. 453, and Pickard, p. 282.

(*) For the research paper in progress, turn in a discussion of universal elements within the literature you have researched versus elements which are unique to the cultural group which you are investigating.

21 Read Robert Frost: "The Road Not Taken, The Pasture, Mending Wall, Home Burial, Fire and Ice, and Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."

 Read Kinnell, p. 322; Coursen, p. 323; and Swennes, p. 324.

23 In class workshop to assemble research paper.

26 In class workshop to assemble research paper.

28 *** 5 - 7 page Research paper due.
 Review for final examination.

30 Last day of class.

*** Final Exam (Date to be announced)

*** = A graded assignment is due on this date.

(*) = One of the eight stages of the research paper should be done.